

AMERICA'S SAFEST COMPANIES 2013

PROTECT WORKERS, PRODUCTION AND PROPERTY

As you will see, the 16 companies honored as America's Safest represent a number of industries and provide over 100,000 workers with a safe work environment.

Profiled by Editor-in-Chief Sandy Smith and Senior Editor Josh Cable, these companies – Advanced Technologies and Laboratories International, Alberici Constructors, American & Efird LLC, The Brock Group, Dresser-Rand, The Great Lakes Construction Co., Honda of South Carolina, LP Building Products, Morton Salt, The Mundy Companies, Northern Improvement Co., Odebrecht, Raytheon Co., Rogers Corp. Advanced Circuit Materials Division, Safariland LLC and Valdes Engineering – represent industries as diverse as public infrastructure construction, textiles, defense, facility maintenance, oil and gas, mining and heavy manufacturing. Despite their differences – worker populations that range from 100 employees to nearly 70,000, one facility or 150, diverse business models and

a range of industries – the 16 America's Safest Companies for 2013 have integrated safety into the way they do business, treating EHS as a building block necessary for success in their respective markets.

Companies that are named to EHS Today's ASC list understand the symbiotic relationship between

safety and productivity, profits, morale and employee retention. The marketplace is demanding that companies be sustainable, and they only should be considered sustainable if they protect their most important asset: employees.

All of the 2013 America's Safest Companies demonstrate support from management and employee involvement; provide innovative solutions to safety challenges; report injury and illness rates significantly lower than the averages for their industries; support comprehensive training programs; believe that the prevention of incidents is the cornerstone of the safety process; have integrated safety into their corporate culture and communicate the value of safety to employees and customers; and substantiate the benefits of the safety process.

The 2013 America's Safest Companies were honored Oct. 29 in Atlanta during the America's Safest Companies Conference at an awards ceremony sponsored by MCR Safety.



Congratulations to the 2013 America's Safest Companies Winners!

**Advanced Technologies and
Laboratories International**
Gaithersburg, MD

Alberici Constructors
St. Louis, MO

American & Efird LLC
Mount Holly, NC

The Brock Group
Beaumont, TX

Dresser-Rand
Houston, TX

**The Great Lakes Construction
Co.**
Hinckley, OH

Honda of South Carolina
Timmonsville, SC

LP Building Products
Nashville, TN

Morton Salt
Chicago, IL

The Mundy Companies
Houston, TX

Northern Improvement Co.
Fargo, ND

Odebrecht
Gables, FL

Raytheon Co.
Waltham, MA

**Rogers Corp. Advanced
Circuit Materials Division**
Rogers, CT

Safariland LLC
Ontario, CA

Valdes Engineering Co.
Lombard, IL

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES AND LABORATORIES INTERNATIONAL INC.

Advanced Technologies and Laboratories International Inc.

Gaithersburg, Md.

100 employees/7 sites/2 EHS professionals

Advanced Technologies and Laboratories (ATL) boasts that its biggest asset is its staff of engineers, scientists, chemists and technical specialists who perform a variety of environmental-management services for government and corporate clients. That's especially true when it comes to the firm's EHS efforts.

"The safety culture is driven by the employees," says Bill Leonard, environment, safety and health manager for ATL. "They take ownership of the hazards-analysis process. They take ownership of leading and facilitating the Zero Accident Council meetings. They take ownership of the Voluntary Protection Program (VPP), facilitating the annual self-assessment and developing the safety-improvement plan

that comes out of that. So it's really all about the employees."

As a prime contractor for the Department of Energy (DOE) in the cleanup of the Hanford Site, ATL workers encounter chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear hazards, in addition to the ergonomic and safety hazards found in more traditional workplaces.

"ATL employees play an active role in addressing those hazards," says Danielle DeLaughter, ES&H program lead for ATL. "Before releasing any new procedure, employees use ATL's hazard-analysis checklist to identify applicable hazards and implement proper controls into procedures to protect the employees from those hazards."

Employees participate in monthly safety inspections, looking for and correcting potentially unsafe conditions and housekeeping issues throughout the laboratory and office areas. They also have stop-work au-

thority, and ATL emphasizes that they can exercise that authority without fear of retribution.

Within their first 30 days (and annually thereafter), new hires can request a workstation evaluation to determine if any ergonomic adjustments need to be made. The firm keeps a close eye on ergonomic issues by monitoring injury rates with and without repetitive-motion impacts.

At press time, ATL had maintained a perfect TRC rate and DART rate dating back to February 2011, and recently received its second DOE VPP Star of Excellence award for safety.



ALBERICI CONSTRUCTORS INC.

At Alberici Constructors, safety is a shared responsibility. Foremen conduct daily safety audits of their work areas. Managers discuss

incidents, near-misses and other safety issues during weekly conference calls. And before any new project, field leaders commit – in writing – that they will ensure that all workers are empowered to stop work if they see unsafe conditions.

"We believe in the value of responsibility, and acknowledging that everyone's role is to ensure that that they are responsible for working safely as well as ensuring that their co-workers do the same," explains Safety Director Kathleen Dobson.

The construction firm has put a number of systems in place to ensure that workers have the proper tools to do their jobs safely.

For example, new hires are paired with an experienced mentor, as are other "at-risk" workers – including those who are new to a

Alberici Constructors Inc.

St. Louis, Mo.

1,100 employees/9 sites/
12 EHS professionals

project, new to a trade or new to a tool.

At each work site, Alberici posts the phone number of its anonymous hotline, which enables employees to report unsafe conditions as well

as situations such as workplace bullying, violence and harassment.

Alberici requires all employees to wear high-visibility retro-reflective clothing for all tasks other than hot work (which necessitates high-visibility welding jackets). And workers who drive company-owned vehicles must take part in defensive-driving training.

Alberici bases its EHS efforts on what it calls the four "SafeRing" principles – plan, communicate, observe and improve – which emphasize the importance of pre-work safety analysis as well as observations by workers at all levels.

"Safety is the first thing we talk about in every meeting, the first thing we con-



centrate on with every project start and the last thing that we send people home with every day," Dobson says. "We understand that if we do not conduct business safely, we will not do business."

AMERICAN & EFIRD LLC

At American & Efird, “zero accidents” is more than a goal, a priority or a mission statement – it’s “simply the right thing to do,” explains John Eapen, vice president of environmental, health and safety/sustainability for the sewing-thread manufacturer. That’s been a common thread throughout the company’s 121-year history, during which the firm never has experienced a work-related fatality.

The foundation of American & Efird’s success – the company had a lost-time-injury rate of 0.08 in its fiscal 2012 – has been upper management’s steadfast support of EHS initiatives, Eapen says.

It doesn’t take more than a quick glance at the company’s organizational chart to see how executive management views safety. With a staff of two full-time EHS professionals – augmented by safety coordinators at every facility – Eapen reports to

American & Efird LLC
Mount Holly, N.C.
1,130 employees/11 sites/
3 EHS professionals

the CEO, giving safety an influential voice in the C-suite.

“When I visit our facilities around the world, it’s easy for me to sit down with the top person in manufacturing operations and talk about issues and challenges and how we can address them,” Eapen explains. “If that organizational structure isn’t there, [safety] gets squished to the bottom somewhere.”

American & Efird takes a top-down and bottom-up approach to safety, though, encouraging employees to participate in safety committees, voice their concerns and ideas via suggestion boxes and report near-miss incidents.

The company also requires supervisors to conduct at

least one behavior-based observation of an employee each week, fostering engagement and communication between shop-floor associates and their main point of contact.

“With an average of 1,100 employees, and each employee engaged at least five times a year, we engage our employees 5,000 times a year,” Eapen says. “That has helped us tremendously.”



THE BROCK GROUP

Management at The Brock Group “recognizes that the success and growth of the company depends on the safety and health of its employees,”

says I.A. (Tony) Huval, senior vice president of environmental, health and safety.

The company has many unique aspects to its EHS program, but some of the important ones include:

- A Hazard Analysis Plan (HAP) that consists of a pre-task safety analysis requiring group discussion and identification of potential hazards.
- A last-minute hazard risk assessment called “PAUSE” that compliments the HAP. It provides employees with the opportunity to Pause, Assess, Understand, Share and Execute a task, taking the necessary precautions to prevent any present or potential hazards.
- A Hazard Concern Reporting process as a means for employees to report hazards

The Brock Group
Houston, Texas
17,499 employees/48 operation
centers/700 sites/33 safety professionals

closure, and employees are informed of the steps taken to resolve their concerns. “A relatively new element to our safety process is our ‘Breaking the Trend’ series,” says Huval. “By identifying our leading and lagging indicators, we have developed and continue to develop campaigns to assist in the reduction of incidents and injuries as identified by these trends.”

The campaigns can be one to six weeks long with a specific discussion topic for four days each week. On the fifth day of the week, a case scenario is given to the employees for discussion and for the employees to apply what they have learned. Employees are given a knowledge check to reinforce what they have learned. A few of the topics in the series include “Stop

the Drop,” which leverages the hazards of material handling and dropped tools; “Protect Your Hands”; and “Building a Safety Culture,” which focuses on goals for a safe workplace.

“By educating each employee about potential hazards and how to mitigate them, each employee has a conscious opportunity and responsibility to take the necessary precautions needed to prevent incidents and injuries,” says Huval.



DRESSER-RAND

Dresser-Rand

Houston, Texas

9,072 employees worldwide/138 sites/
53 EHS professionals

At Dresser-Rand, management is committed to safe production and a focus on leading indicators is leading the charge toward safe production.

Being recognized as one of America's Safest Companies "demonstrates that Dresser-Rand's HSE Management System executes under an operational excellence philosophy recognizing that HSE requires the same process and people discipline that is required in quality, productivity, cycle time and cost reduction," says Peter Salvatore, VP and chief safety officer at the Houston-based heavy-equipment manufacturer.

Annual performance objectives are established for managers at Dresser-Rand and include specific safety goals that they are expected to achieve within their respective organizations. Managers are measured in the following areas:

- Facility audits, which include

employee interviews and safety improvement evaluations.

- Safety meeting attendance and participation.
- EHS training.
- Incident reviews.

Employees are encouraged to participate on safety committees and emergency response teams; perform behavior-based and process safety audits; take action to stop work if safety is an issue; and develop job safety and environmental analyses and hazard identification and risk assessment documents, among other things.

"Safety is a condition of employment and employees are fully integrated into the safety process within Dresser-Rand," says Salvatore. "It plays a major role in manufacturing operations, the service center and the field. The most important goal is to return every employee home safely every day. In the words of Dresser-Rand President and CEO Vincent Volpe Jr., 'It's all about the people.'"

Being recognized for safety performance "provides Dresser-Rand with a competitive advantage in our industry ad-



vocating that we have HSE established as a core value integrated within our business and confirming our commitment to operational excellence," Salvatore added.

Safety is the catalyst for driving operational excellence in all functions of Dresser-Rand's business, he says. "We recognize that our HSE performance is only limited by our overall culture of discipline (attention to detail), recognizing that if it is truly a cultural value, its functional application is not selective."

THE GREAT LAKES CONSTRUCTION CO.

The Great Lakes Construction Co.

Hinckley, OH

500 employees/45 sites/
3 safety professionals and 1 safety intern

As a safety professional, how would you like working for a company where your department had no fixed budget – meaning that you could purchase equipment and provide training as needed without worrying about the cost – and you reported directly to your CEO, so you know that safety is front-of-mind in the C-suite?

William Hocevar, CSP, CIH, is the safety director at The Great Lakes Construction Co., and he has nothing but praise for senior management's commitment to safety.

"Our senior management has put forth a tremendous effort to empower our employees to own the safety program at Great Lakes," says Hocevar. "With the addition of a new training facility, senior management sets aside two months per year geared

at educating our employees. Education focuses on managing risk in the diverse markets we work in, such as water treatment plants, bridgework and oil and gas. Our employees take that education and manage all aspects of risk on the project, making the safety program their own. This is our 'top down/ bottom up' approach."

Using that approach, along with strong senior management support, innovative programs spurred by employees, risk management education and integration of EHS in all aspects of its business, Great Lakes is "able to achieve a sustainable business that will save lives and change our industry," Hocevar adds.

Safety plays an integral part in bid discussions with estimators, and employees have stop-work authority. Employees are required to discuss hazards in each morning's pre-task analysis and offer ways to eliminate

those hazards. Work is not permitted to begin until every employee feels comfortable with the hazard corrections. Company officers hold bi-weekly safety talks, employees create the weekly toolbox talks and the company holds lunch-and-learn education sessions.

"EHS excellence is regarded as an essential component of The Great Lakes Construction Co.," says Hocevar. "It works in conjunction with quality and efficiency to form the base of our company and to ensure its success and sustainability."



HONDA OF SOUTH CAROLINA MFG. INC.

At Honda of South Carolina (HSC), associate engagement drives the operation's safety success. HSC, which makes all-terrain vehicles, achieved a lost-time-injury rate of 0.3 in its fiscal year 2012 and a rate of 0 in fiscal 2011. Employees maintain the momentum by participating in daily safety audits, safety committees, ergonomics teams and other activities.

"When the associates actually buy into the program, they recognize that they are the program – that they are safety," says

Eric Evans, safety coordinator. "It's what they do that makes things work."

Throughout the facility, associates lead their respective departments in daily stretching exercises to help stave off repetitive-stress injuries. As part of HSC's focus on ergonomics, associates have been enthusiastic participants in the Institute of Industrial Engineers' Ergo Cup competition, winning the 2013 Ergo Cup in the Team-Driven Workplace Solutions category.

HSC requires associates to conduct daily pre-shift audits of their departments to identify and fix safety issues. HSC also asks employees to participate in bi-monthly safety-audit reviews, in which they can learn about safety findings from other departments and share lessons learned from their own.

Honda of South Carolina Mfg. Inc.

Timmonsville, S.C.

933 employees/1 site/3 EHS professionals
(1 onsite certified occupational nurse)

Among other opportunities for participation are bimonthly safety roundtable discussions, in which 15 randomly selected employees meet with senior management to discuss safety-related issues of interest or concern.

Since HSC began production in 1998, the site has been making steady strides in safety and health by empowering its associates – and by emphasizing that what happens on the job always hits close to home.

"We come to work for one reason: to provide for our family," says EHS Manager Wendell Hughes. "And if you get hurt, you're not going to be able to provide for your family. By making it personal, [associates are] buy into it and believe it more, and they apply that to their day-to-day routine."



LP BUILDING PRODUCTS

The foundational approach to safety at Nashville's LP Building Products is through FELT Leadership. This approach is characterized by an active demonstration by all leadership that the company is about the people, not the numbers.

"At LP we strive to not just make safety one of the many things that we do or manage but to make safety part of everything we do," says Keith Harned, corporate health and safety director. "With that approach, safety is not a priority but part of the driving culture that guides our thoughts, actions and behaviors."

Safety is the first item covered in the biweekly senior management meetings, as well as the first item on the agenda at the company's quarterly business review. All recordable injuries are discussed with senior management by the vice president of the appropriate business, ensuring that the vice presidents are keenly aware of the safety and health activities of their business. Safety also is a standing agenda item in each board of directors meeting, and the board receives a quarterly EHS update/report.

All supervisory personnel, including the CEO, have annual safety and health goals and objectives. These goals are built into the business plans and individual performance goals. Quarterly and annual reviews of progress are conducted with supervisors.

From the project planning stage to daily work activities, safety is paramount at LP. The company's EHS Council, led

LP Building Products (Louisiana Pacific Corp.)

Nashville, Tenn.

4,000 employees/25 facilities/9 corporate-level EHS professionals/1 dedicated EHS resource at each facility

Two-time America's Safest Companies winner

by Harned, provides oversight for and sanctions all new EHS-related work activities or projects for the company. This corporate-level council is composed of operations directors from each business, a plant manager from each business, corporate engineering, corporate legal and representatives from corporate EHS.

"Some of our plants have worked 1 to 2 million hours without a recordable injury," says Harned. "They sustain this performance by continuing to focus on the small things and recognizing opportunities for improvement, acting on those opportunities and communicating the learnings throughout the company so that others can learn from them as well."



MORTON SALT

Morton Salt's safety program is aimed at providing the "Morton Salt Extended Family" – every employee, outside contractors, family members and friends – with the skill and knowledge to be free of personal injury. The program has been designed to heighten awareness for those everyday tasks/activities we all perform, such as driving cars, lifting heavy objects, walking across railroad tracks, etc. These tasks have become so routine, says Michael Resetar, director, health, safety and security, that it's easy to become complacent and careless.

"Nothing is more important to Morton Salt than health and safety... not production, not sales, not profit," says CEO Christian Herrmann.

There are four primary ways in which employees are engaged in Morton's safety process: reporting of near misses, participation in Safety Days, submission of best practices and site participation in OSHA's Voluntary Protection Program.

Morton Salt
Chicago, Ill.
3,000 employees/
67 EHS professionals

The near-miss reporting program is designed to allow employees to be proactive in the prevention of accidents by informing a manager or supervisor of a potential hazard before it happens. "We have shown through statistical data that as the number of near misses reported increases, the number of accidents decreases," says Resetar. "Our sites (aggregate) are encouraged to submit at least 750 near misses per quarter."

Each site is required to participate in an annual Safety Day, in which operations are shut down and employees participate in team building and other activities such as "Safety Jeopardy" and fire extinguisher training. Larger sites often have a guest speaker and at all sites, lunch is

served by senior leadership.

Employees are encouraged to submit best practices that may improve operations and safety. The information is shared via the web site and a quarterly email. Employees receive items such as a baseball cap, Morton coffee mug, etc. for each best practice submitted.

"Safety is what you do when no one is watching," says Mark Roberts, a member of the Morton Salt board of executive directors.



THE MUNDY COMPANIES

At The Mundy Companies, safety is a core value that receives support from the highest levels of the firm. All employees carry a laminated card – signed by co-owners Shane Burden and David Mundy – stating that they have the right and responsibility to stop work if they believe it is unsafe. Burden and Mundy take a hands-on approach to reinforcing the maintenance contractor's EHS principles, frequently visiting the company's work sites.

"You will find the owners of the Mundy Companies doing audits in a petrochemical plant in the middle of the summer in Houston, or it could be in North Carolina or wherever we work," says Bill Pratt, vice president of environmental, safety and health. "They're highly visible and committed. Their expectation of each and every one of us is that no one gets hurt while performing their work."

The Mundy Cos.
Houston, TX
3,700 employees/40 sites/
35 EHS professionals
Two-time ASC winner

While company leaders make a point to show their commitment to EHS, they also emphasize the importance of having an employee-driven safety culture. Associates play an active role in EHS by leading safety committees, sharing best practices and participating in the company's behavior-based observation process, among other activities.

For the past two decades, employees have begun each workday with stretches and calisthenics designed to minimize sprains, strains and other repetitive-motion injuries. The company's stretching regimen has been so effective that a number of other firms have adopted it, Pratt notes.

"It helps set the tone for the day," Pratt says. "It gets people thinking, 'We've got some work to do, and we need to make sure that we do it safely.'"

Throughout the day, associates keep safety in their back pocket – literally. The company has created a "three-in-one" card, which provides a checklist to help employees identify hazards and observe work processes with safety in mind.



NORTHERN IMPROVEMENT CO.

Once upon a time, Northern Improvement Co. considered accidents and injuries as costs of doing business. Over the years, however, the Fargo, N.D.-based construction firm has come to view safety as a “cornerstone” of its business, Vice President and Safety Manager Jack Kolberg says. The company’s safety record has helped Northern Improvement secure a number of new contracts – even when the firm didn’t submit the lowest bid.

“We’re involved in quite a bit of work in North Dakota’s oil fields. Most companies that we work for in the oil patch have high expectations for contractors and have to meet very strict safety requirements in order to secure work,” Kolberg explains. “We no longer look at safety as an expense, but realize that safety indeed is a profit base.”

The company takes a top-down and bottom-up approach to EHS. President Tom

Northern Improvement Co.
Fargo, N.D.
750 employees/
1 EHS professional

McCormick stays involved in safety on a daily basis, and clearly states the company’s philosophy in its EHS policy: “No job shall be considered complete unless every precaution and safety practice has been performed.” The firm encourages associate to participate in safety committees, safety huddles and anonymous safety-perception surveys.

Northern Improvement rewards employees for their participation in safety activities. Associates get scratch-off tickets for taking part in daily and weekly safety huddles, and are entered in monthly cash drawings when they report near misses.

The company places a special emphasis on training. As part of its onboarding process, experienced workers mentor new hires on how to safely complete their job tasks.

“We can only expect employ-

ees to perform safely when given both the education and the tools to do their jobs,” Kolberg says.

Northern Improvement’s customers aren’t the only ones that have recognized the firm’s EHS efforts. In 2011, five Northern Improvement sites received the North Dakota Safety Council’s Occupational Safety Merit Award, and the firm twice has received the Associated General Contractors of America’s Construction Safety Excellence Award.



ODEBRECHT

At Odebrecht USA, a construction and engineering firm based in Coral Gables, Fla., the emphasis is on controlling high-risk activities and striving to fully integrate health and safety into all aspects of operations through a process of continuous improvement.

The company issues its own work permits in an effort to identify and control high-risk activities. They include hot work and confined space. This year as part of its continual improvement process, new permits will be added to the process, including material handling/crane operations and work from elevated heights.

Deborah Hampton, HSE officer for U.S. operations, says the company “is committed to performing every task in the safest manner possible with minimal risk.”

The goal of continuous improvement extends beyond the safety process at work to employee health.

Odebrecht USA
Coral Gables, Fla.
180 employees/6 sites/
10 EHS professionals

“As part of our continual improvement commitment, we are piloting a wellness program which includes a full baseline metrics for all workers, monthly wellness meetings, fresh fruit served daily and an enhanced stretch-and-flex exercise program each morning,” says Hampton. All workers are provided healthy eating tips and taught exercises by a physical therapist that they can perform daily in their homes.

Management is firmly committed to a workplace of healthy employees and controlled risks.

“We aspire to change the face of construction not only through our innovative methods but our mentoring program to other companies in the interest of improving health and safety for American workers,” says Hampton.

CEO and President Gilberto Neves says everyone at the company is “deeply humbled” by the recognition as one of America’s Safest Companies, adding, “We always strive to perform to achieve the highest level of client satisfaction, and it is gratifying that all of our team members and partners would be recognized for their dedication and on-the-job accomplishments. We are extremely proud of our team. The numerous trainings that have been made available to our members and subcontractors have allowed us to raise safety awareness and practices.”



RAYTHEON CO.

The largest of the 2013 America's Safest Companies, Raytheon Co. specializes in defense and aerospace systems for the defense, homeland security and other government markets throughout the world. Raytheon employs 68,000 people at 150 sites worldwide, all of whom are encouraged to participate in the safety process via safety committees, reviews of safety alerts, participation on emergency response teams, attendance at safety fairs and participation in OSHA's Voluntary Protection Program.

"EHS is a value at Raytheon. Our focus is absolute in this regard. Our employees not only own the program, they are the EHS program," says Paul Zybert, senior manager, Raytheon Corporate EHS.

In 2009, the Raytheon Integrated Defense Systems (IDS) business rolled out an employee engagement program titled, "Why I Work Safe" (WIWS). The program featured employee badges and em-

Raytheon Co.
Waltham, Mass.
68,000 employees/150 locations
worldwide/200 EHS professionals
Two-time ASC winner

ployee-made videos. For the WIWS badge program, employees received a badge with the following message on the back: "Look at the front of this card. There is no task so important that you cannot take the time to do it safely." On the front side of the badge was a blank photo holder with the heading "Why I Work Safe." Employees inserted photos of their children, spouses, pets, homes, cars and boats. More than 10,000 badges have been issued to Raytheon employees since the program's inception.

The second part of the IDS WIWS program was employee-made videos. Employees were encouraged to submit a one-minute video from home explaining or showing why they work

safe; could be family members, objects or activities. Each of the 39 employees who submitted a video received a promotional safety T-shirt and entry into a gift card raffle. Additionally, video cameras were set up in cafeterias during lunch at several IDS facilities to allow employees to briefly state why they worked safe.

"We are able to offer our customers superior value, low-risk, cutting-edge solutions because our people are there to ensure that happens. Powerful employee-run EHS programs equals unparalleled mission assurance for our customers," says J.A. Rodriguez Jr., senior manager, Intelligence, Information and Services EHS.



ROGERS CORP. – ADVANCED CIRCUIT MATERIALS DIVISION

Rogers Corp.
Advanced Circuit Material Division
Rogers, Conn.
480 employees/4 sites/5 safety professionals

MOPS make the difference at Rogers Corp. Advanced Circuit Material Division. Not the kind you use to clean the floors, but a program called "Management Program Owners for Safety" (MOPS).

"We've seen that management support is more than approving funds and attending meetings," says Brian Alexander, CSP, CIH, CAS, regional ACMD safety and health manager. "We wanted to make it more action oriented."

The company created a new program to improve management commitment and provide each major location of the Rogers, Conn.-based company with additional management active support. With MOPS, managers who normally are not associated with the location are safety owners.

Alexander said these managers are required to go out once a week during different shifts and discuss and review safety with the employees. All managers are trained and coached by the safety manager.

"This program has produced tremendous positive results throughout our campuses," he says. "The MOPS teams have helped identify and solve lockout/tagout, fall, cuts, fires, contractor safety, storage and many other safety concerns."

During these MOPS safety walk-throughs, managers discuss safety with employees, review safety concerns and give feedback on safety. Since its inception, the program has identified and mitigated 200 safety hazards.

"Organizations often write page-long vision statements, carefully crafting every word, having untold meetings and countless hours reviewing, editing and discussing. After all that, do they really think people on the production floor are going to live it, let alone remember it?" asks Alexander.

"Our Rogers philosophy on safety is very simple: 'Make it easy to be safe.'"

Rogers stands out because of a commitment "to getting everybody meaningfully involved in safety. I mean meaningful, not just activity based," says Alexander. "Bottom line, safety needs to change; from old school compliance systems to value-added structures that create a global competitive advantage to all of our customers."



SAFARILAND LLC

For Safariland LLC, 2008 was a watershed year. In the midst of a companywide reorganization, the Ontario, Calif.-based manufacturer of law-enforcement gear decided to recalibrate what had been a disjointed and compliance-based EHS program. Safariland hired its first corporate EHS director – Patrick Ross – and began laying the foundation for a safety culture grounded in employee empowerment and engagement.

“If you’re really going to make a change, you have to go where the boots meet the ground, where they actually have the knowledge of the day-to-day nuts and bolts of the operation,” Ross says. “[Plant-floor associates] are the cheapest consultants you could hire.”

From the start, Ross was on a mission to create as many opportunities as possible for employee participation. He launched safety committees (“our first or-

Safariland LLC
Ontario, Calif.
1,384 employees/5 sites/8 EHS professionals (5 full-time/3 part-time)

ganized effort to solicit employee input to improve safety in our facilities”)

and developed a risk-assessment process called the “Red Zone.”

Building on those “cornerstones,” Ross and his team have added a number of other mechanisms that encourage associate involvement, including near-miss investigations, environmental-impact assessments, morning exercises, weekly toolbox training sessions, biannual town-hall meetings and the “Go-Yield-Stop” employee observation program.

As employees have stepped up their participation in EHS initiatives, Safariland’s lost-time-injury rate has declined in lockstep – from a rate of over 6 in 2008 to a rate of zero in 2012.

The injury rate, however, is just one of

four key metrics that Safariland uses to evaluate the success of its EHS program. The company combines its injury rate with measurements of employee participation (each site has a goal of 75 percent associate involvement in EHS activities), risk assessments and near-miss investigations to calculate an overall EHS score. The score plays an integral role in determining the annual bonuses for plant-floor workers, managers and executives.



VALDES ENGINEERING CO.

Employees of Valdes Engineering begin each workday with a safety ritual: holding the stairway handrails. It’s mandatory for all associates entering and exiting the company’s Chicago headquarters and at any Valdes work site. While it might seem like a trivial exercise, the handrail rule has set the tone for a thriving safety culture.

“If we can do the small things right – like hold the handrails or put in our earplugs – then we can do the big things right,” says Kraig Whalen, CSP, director of safety.

Valdes, which provides engineering and project-management services to firms in the petrochemical and other industries, has been getting the big things right. At press time, the company had logged more than 1 million injury-free work hours, and was on track for its fourth consecutive year of achieving a perfect lost-time injury rate.

Whalen attributes the company’s safety

Valdes Engineering Co.
Lombard, Ill.
200 employees/10 sites/
3 EHS professionals

success to a number of elements, including its thorough training regimen (all Valdes field personnel have earned OSHA 10- or 30-hour cards), its job-safety

assessment process and its peer-to-peer Safety Ovation awards program, which recognizes employees for interventions and other safe behaviors.

But he emphasizes that safety starts with upper management’s unwavering support. From the day Whalen joined the company, management made it clear that safety never takes a backseat to work deadlines. All employees are empowered with stop-work authority – and they receive a Safety Ovation award when they use it.

“We give people the time to complete their tasks safely and correctly,” Whalen says. “There are no time restraints.”

The company has high expectations for its clients and subcontractors as well. Valdes reviews the safety performance of all future and existing clients, and has developed a rigorous screening process



to ensure that potential subcontractors have safety records as good as or better than its own.